

**German Travelers to**  
**CALIFORNIA**

**Prepared for**  
**California Tourism**



**By**

**CIC Research, Inc.**  
**8361 Vickers Street**  
**San Diego, CA 92111-2112**



**February 2007**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### GERMAN TRAVELERS TO CALIFORNIA

**Total Market.** Of 1,416,000 German visitors to the U.S., 21.8%, or 309,000 visited California in 2005. This represented a 12.4% increase from 2004, and a drop of 46% from the peak year of 1996. German arrival volumes at California ports-of-entry are showing a decrease in 2006 after increasing for the previous three years.

|      | Visitors to CA<br>from Germany<br>(est.) | Germany<br>to CA as % of<br>total US |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1994 | 479,000                                  | 29.5%                                |
| 1995 | 567,000                                  | 30.7%                                |
| 1996 | 571,000                                  | 28.6%                                |
| 1997 | 532,000                                  | 26.7%                                |
| 1998 | 504,000                                  | 26.5%                                |
| 1999 | 524,000                                  | 26.4%                                |
| 2000 | 395,000                                  | 22.1%                                |
| 2001 | 271,000                                  | 20.6%                                |
| 2002 | 236,000                                  | 19.8%                                |
| 2003 | 238,000                                  | 20.2%                                |
| 2004 | 275,000                                  | 20.8%                                |
| 2005 | 309,000                                  | 21.8%                                |

**Main Destination.** Over three-fourths of all German visitors to California (76%) reported California was the main destination of their U.S. trip. Leisure visitors from Germany reported the same percentage (76%).

**Purpose of Trip.** Among all German visitors to California in 2005, 63% reported vacation/holiday was one of their major reasons for traveling. Other reasons for traveling included visiting friends/relatives (42%), and business (34%).

Visitors often report multiple purposes of trip. Most leisure visitors from Germany (86%) reported visiting California in 2005 on vacation/holiday. The proportion of leisure visitors who were visiting friends and relatives in 2005 was 44%.

**Port of Entry.** A combined total of 62% of German visitors to California entered the U.S. through west coast ports. Just under one-third (32%) entered through Los Angeles, followed by San Francisco (29%). The third highest port was Washington DC which processed 7% of German visitors to California.

**Top Metropolitan Areas Visited in California.** German visitors to California in 2005 tended to center their trip itineraries on the major cities of San Francisco (55%), Los Angeles (47%), and San Diego (19%).

**Leisure/Recreation Activities.** The top leisure and recreation activities reported by visitors from Germany, whether traveling for business or leisure, were dining, shopping and visiting historical places. German travelers are more likely to visit national parks, tour the countryside, visit cultural heritage sites, go camping or hiking, and visit Native American communities than other overseas visitor groups.

**Advance Trip Decision.** German travelers to California reported making their trip decision 101 days in advance of their trip. This is a longer average trip decision time than the 90 days reported by all overseas visitors to California. German leisure travelers made their trip decision 131 days in advance of their trip.

**Means of Booking Air Trip.** Three-fifths of German travelers to California (60%) booked their air trip via a travel agent, up from 58% in 2004. This was in line with all overseas visitors to California (57%).

**Means of Booking Lodging.** About 25% of all German visitors and 33% of German leisure travelers pre-booked their lodging via a travel agent. In 2005 only 7% of German travelers reported booking California lodging through a hotel/motel directly, compared to 13.4 in 2004. About 9% of leisure German travelers booked their accommodations through the hotel/motel directly.

**Trip Information Sources.** Among German visitors to California, the most frequently mentioned sources of information included: a travel agency (39%), followed by personal computer (30%), government sources (26%), the airlines directly (17%), and friends/relatives (16%). German visitors to California were the only major overseas visitor group to use government sources significantly.

**Length of Stay.** German visitors stayed an average of 24.3 nights in the U.S. and 14.4 nights in California. In comparison the length of stay for all overseas visitors to California was 10.6 nights in the state.

**Sex and Age.** Men comprised 66% of German travelers to California with a median age of 44 years. This is similar to the median age reported by all overseas visitors to California (42 years). Women represented 34% of all German travelers to California in 2005, with a median age of 41 years compared to 40 years reported by all overseas female visitors. Looking at leisure travel only, about 61% of German leisure travelers to California are men and 39% are women.

**Travel Party Size.** Nearly all (94%) of German travel groups consist of adults only. Only 6% of German travel groups to California include children. The mean travel party size for all German visitors to the state was 1.4 people and the party size for leisure visitors was 1.6 people.

**Annual Household Income.** Visitors from Germany reported higher median household incomes (\$85,400) relative to all overseas visitors to California (\$78,800). The median household income of German leisure visitors to California was (\$71,800).

**Accommodations.** Almost eight in ten German visitors (79%) to California chose a hotel or motel as their primary type of accommodation during their stay in 2005. This proportion is the same as the 79% reported by all overseas visitors to California. German leisure visitors were slightly less likely to stay in a hotel/motel (76%). A relatively high 36% of all German visitors and 43% of German leisure visitors stayed in a private home in 2005.

**Use of Prepaid Package.** In 2005, 20% of German visitors and 32% of German leisure visitors used prepaid packages.

**Expenditures.** Visitors to California from Germany spent an estimated 360 million dollars in California in 2005. German visitors were spending an average of \$81 per day during their visit. Leisure visitors from Germany spent an average of \$64 per day. Each visitor to California from Germany spent an average of \$1,166 in the state, and each leisure visitor spent an average of \$742 in California.

**Average International Airfare.** Average international airfare to the U.S. was \$1,664 for German visitors and \$1,243 for German leisure visitors.